

STRAIGHT Milliam MacLeod Raine

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"I'M GLAD YOU'RE GLAD."

Synopsis.-Adventurous and reckless, rather than criminal, and excited by liquor, Curly Flandrau and his chum, Mac, both practically mere boys, become involved in a horse-stealing adventure. Disposing of the stolen stock in the town of Saguache, Ariz., the band separates. Mac is killed by a posse and Curly taken captive, after he has shot one and himself been wounded The man shot is Luck Cullison, a former fighting sheriff. Cullison's friends determine to lynch Curly as an example to cattle thieves. With the rope around his neck he is saved by the intervention of Kate Cullison, Luck's daughter, Luck questions the boy concerning a notorious outlaw, Soapy Stone, real leader of the rustlers. Flandrau learns that Soapy Stone is Cullison's bitter enemy and exercises a baleful influence over the ex-sheroff's son Sam, who has quarreled with his father. Cullison goes bail for Curly. Curly rescues Soapy Stone from a bear trap. At the London ranch he discovers that the outlaw is Sam Cullison's rival for Laura London's hand. Flandrau, visiting Stone's ranch, is convinced a train robbery is being planned. Sam leaves the ranch for Saguache. Curly accompanies him. Eavesdropping. Curly hears Stone and his lieutenant, Lute Blackwell, arrange to hold up the train at Tin Cup crossing and after the robbery shoot young Cullison and leave his body n the scene. Curly is accused by Stone of being a spy of Luck Cullison's. They are separated, but part with the understanding that their next meeting will mean a fight to the death. Curly confides n Luck. Stone is forced to leave town. The express office in Saguache is robbed of \$20,000. Luck disappears and is suspected by the sheriff of the crime.

CHAPTER II .- Continued. -9-

To Bolt his disappearance was as good as a confession of guilt. He searched Luck's room at the hotel. Among other things, he found an old envelope with interesting data penciled on it.

Before nightfall the word was whis pered all over Saguache that Luck Cullison, pioneer cattleman and for mer sheriff, was suspected of the W & S. express robbery and hac fled to save himself from arrest. At first men marveled that one so well known and so popular, one who had been so prominent in affairs, could be suspected of such a crime, but as they listened to the evidence and saw it fall like blocks of a building into place, the conviction grew that he was the masked bandit wanted by the sheriff.

Red-headed Bob Cullison finished making the diamond hitch and proudly called his cousin Kate to inspect the packhorse.

"You never saw the hitch thrown better, sis," he bragged, boylike. "Uncle Luck says I do it well as he

"It's fine, Bob," his cousin agreed, with the proper enthusiasm in her dark eyes. "You'll have to teach me how to do it one of these days."

She was in a khaki riding skirt, and she pulled herself to the saddle of her own horse. From this position she gave him final instructions before leav-

It had been on Wednesday morning that Luck Cullison disappeared from the face of the earth. Before twentyfour hours the gossip was being whispered in the most distant canons of Papago county. The riders of the Circle C knew it, but none of them

had yet told either Bob or Kate. Now it was Friday morning and Kate was beginning to wonder why her father did not call her up. Could his train robbery at Tin Cup and her father so busy that he could not take time to ride to a telephone station? She did not like to leave the ranch just now, even for a few hours, but other business called her away. Sweeney was holding down the fort at the Del Oro against Fendrick's sheepherders, and his weekly supply of provisions had to be taken to him. Since she wanted to see with her own eyes how

things were getting along at the canon. she was taking the supplies in person. She rode from sunlight into shadow and from shadow to sunlight again, winding along the hill trail that took her toward the Del Oro. After hours of travel she came to the saddle from which one looked down to the gap in the canon walls that had been the common watering place of all men's cattle, but now was homesteaded by her father. She could see the hut, the fence line running parallel to the stream on the other side, some grazing

cattle, Sweeney's horse in the corral. The piteous bleating of a lamb floated to her. Kate dismounted and made her way toward the sound. A pathetic little huddle of frightened life tried to struggle free at her approach. The slim leg of the lemb had become Wedged at the intersection of several was fear as well as anger in her voice. "It'll be all right, Kate. Walt till provided at the public cost in Paris

rocks in such a way that it could not

be withdrawn.

Kate pulled the boulder away, and released the prisoner. She took the soft, woolly creature in her arms, and examined the wounded limb, all torn and raw from its efforts to escape. A wound, she recalled, ought to be washed with cold water and bound. Returning to her horse, she put the little animal in front of the saddle and continued on the trail that led down to the river.

Sweeney came out from the cabin and hailed her. He was a squat, weather-beaten man, who had ridden for her father ever since she could remember. "What in Mexico you got there?" he

asked in surprise. She explained the circumstances under which she had found the lamb. "And what you aiming to do with

"I'm going to tie up its leg and take it across the river. 'Some of the C. F. herders are sure to find it before

"Sho! What are you fooling with Cass Fendrick's sheep for?" he grumbled.

"It isn't a sheep, but a lamb. And I'm not going to see it suffer, no matter who owns it. I'll just ride across and leave it outside the fence," she

Sweeney did not wait for her assent. but swung to the saddle. She handed him the lamb, and he forded the

Sweeney saw some one disappear into a wash as he reached the fence. The rider held up the lamb, jabbered a sentence of broncho Spanish at the spot where the man had been, put down his bleating burden, and cantered back to his own side of the river.

An hour later, Kate, on the return trip, topped the rise where she had found the lamb. Pulling up her-pony, to rest the horse from its climb, she gazed back across the river to the rolling ridges among which lay the C. F. ranch. Oddly enough, she had never seen Cass Fendrick. He had come to Papago county a few years before, and had bought the place from an earlier settler. In the disagreement that had fallen between the two men, she was wholly on the side of her father. Sometimes she had wondered what manner of man this Cass Fendrick might be: lisagreeable, of course, but after precisely what fashion?

"Your property, I believe, Miss Cul-

She turned at sound of the suave, imused drawl, and looked upon a dark, slim young man of picturesque appearance. He was bowing to her with an obvious intention of overdoing it.

Her instinct told the girl who he was. She did not need to ask herself any longer what Cass Fendrick looked

He was holding out to her the bloodstained kerchief that had been tied to the lamb's leg.

"I didn't care to have it returned,"

she told him with cold civility. "New, if you'd only left a note to say so, it would have saved me quite a considerable climb," he suggested.

In spite of herself a flicker of amusement lit her eyes. She had a sense of humor. "I did not think of that, and since you have troubled to return it to me, I can only say thank

She held out her hand for the kerchief, but he did not move. "I don't know but what I'll keep it, after all, for a souvenir."

She ignored his sardonic mockery. "I don't let live creatures suffer when it be that Soapy Stone was pulling off I can help it. Are you going to give me my handkerchief?"

"Haven't made up my mind yet. Perhaps I'll have it washed and bring it home to you."

She decided he was trying to flirt with her, and turned the head of her horse to start.

"Now your father has pulled his freight, I expect it will be safe to call," he added.

The bridle rein tightened. "What nonsense are you saying about my father?"

"No news, Miss Cullison; just what everybody is saying, that he has gone to cover on account of the holdup." A chill fear drenched her heart. "Do

you mean the holdup of the Limited at Tin Cup?" "No I don't." He looked at her

sharply. "Mean to say you haven't heard of the holdup of the W. & S. Express company at Saguache?" "No. When was it?" "Tuesday night. The man got

away with twenty thousand dollars." "And what has my father to do with that?" she demanded haughtily. A satisfied spleen purred in his

voice. "My dear young lady, that is what everyone is asking." "What do you mean? Say it." There | der and beg her not to cry.

Had her father somehow got into trouble trying to save Sam?

"Oh, I'm saving nothing. But what Sheriff Bolt means is that when he gets his handcuffs on Luck Cullison he'll have the man that can tell him where that twenty thousand is." "It's a lie."

He waved his hand airily, as one who declined responsibility in the matter, but his dark, saturnine face sparkled with malice.

"Maybe so. Seems to be some evidence, but I reckon he can explain that away-when he comes back. The holdup dropped a hat with the initials L. C. in the band, since identified as his. He had lost a lot of money at poker. Next day he paid it. He had no money in the bank, but maybe he

found it growing on a cactus bush." "You liar!" she panted, eyes blaz-

"I'll take that from you, my dear, because you look so blamed pretty when you're mad; but I wouldn't take it from him-from your father, who is hiding out in the hills somewhere."

Anger uncurbed welled from her in an inarticulate cry. He had come close to her, and was standing beside the stirrup, one bold hand upon the rein. Her quirt went swiftly up and down, cut like a thin bar of red-hot iron across his uplifted face. He stumbled back, half blind with the pain. Before he could realize what had happened the spur on her little boot touched the side of the pony and it was off with a bound. She was galloping wildly down the trail toward

He looked after her, fingers caressing the welt that burned his cheek.

"You'll pay for that, Kate Cullison," he said aloud to himself.

CHAPTER III.

"Ain't She the Gamest Little Thoroughbred?"

Kate galloped into the ranch plaza around which the buildings were set, slipped from her pony, and ran at once to the telephone. Bob was on a side porch mending a bridle.

"Have you heard anything from dad?" she cried through the open door.

"Nope," he answered, hammering

Kate called up the hotel where Maloney was staying at Saguache, but could not get him. She asked in turn for Mackenzie, for Yesler, for Alec Flandrau.

While she waited for an answer, the girl moved nervously about the room. She could not sit down or settle herself at anything. For some instinct told her that Fendrick's taunt was not a lie cut out of whole cloth.

The bell rang. Instantly she was at the telephone. Mackenzie was at the other end of the line.

"Oh, Uncle Mac." She had called him uncle ever since she could remem-



He Stumbled Back Half Blind With Pain.

ber. "What is it they are saying about dad? Tell me it isn't true," she

"A pack of lees, lassie." His Scotch idiom and accent had succumbed to thirty years on the plains, but when he became excited it rose triumphant through the acquired speech of the Southwest.

"Then is he there-in Saguache, I mean?"

"No-o. He's not in town." "Where is he?"

"Hoots! He'll just have gone somewhere on business."

He did not bluff well. Through the hearty assurance she pierced to the note of trouble in his voice.

"You're hiding something from me, Uncle Mac. I won't have it. You tell me the truth-the whole truth." In three sentences he sketched it for her, and when he had finished he

knew by the sound of her voice that she was greatly frightened. "Something has happened to him. I'm coming to town. I'll bring Bob.

Save us two rooms at the hotel." She turned to her cousin, who was standing big-eyed at her elbow. "What is it, Kate? Has anything happened to Uncle Luck?"

She swallowed a lump in her throat. "Dad's gone, Bob. Nobody knows where. They say-the liars-that he robbed the W. & S. Express company." Suddenly her face went down into her forearm on the table and sobs began to rack her body. The boy, staggered at this preposterous charge, could only lay his hand on her shoul-

Uncle Luck comes back. He'n make em sick for talking about him."

His cousin nodded, choking down her sobs "Of course, It-it'll come out all right-as soon as he finds out what they're saying. Saddle two horses right away, Bob."

"Sure. We'll soon find where he is,

I bet you." The setting sun found their journey less than half done. Kate was tortured with anxiety. Deep within her something denied that her father could be gone out of a world so good. And if he were alive, Curly Flandrau would find him-Curly and Dick between them. Luck Cullison had plenty of good friends who would not stand by and see him wronged.

Any theory of his disappearance that accepted his guilt did not occur to her mind for an instant. The two had been very close to each other. Luck had been in the habit of saying smilingly that she was his major domo, his right bower. Some share of his lawless temperament she inherited, enough to feel sure that this particular kind of wrongdoing was impossible for him. He was reckless, sometimes passionate, but she did not need to reassure herself that he was scrupulously honest.

This brought her back to the only other tenable hypothesis-foul play. And from this she shrank with a quaking heart. For surely if his enemies wished to harm him they would destroy him, and this was a conclusion against which she fought desperately.

The plaza clock boomed ten strokes as they rode into Saguache. Mackenzie was waiting for them on the steps of the hotel.

"Have they-has anything been-?" The owner of the Fiddleback shook his grizzled head. "Not yet. Didn't you meet Curly?"

"No." "He rode out to come in with you, but if he didn't meet you by ten he was to come back. You took the north road, I reckon?"

"Yes." He put an arm around her shoulders and drew her into the hotel with cheerful talk.

"Come along, Bob. We're going to tuck away a good supper first off. While you're eating, I'll tell you all there is to be told."

Kate opened her lips to say that she was not hungry and could not possibly eat a bite, but she thought better of it. Bob had tasted nothing since noon, and of course he must be fed.

Curly came into the room, and the girl rose to meet him. He took her little hand in his tanned muscular one, and somehow from his grip she gathered strength.

"I'm so glad you've come," she said simply.

"I'm glad you're glad," he smiled cheerfully.

He knew she had been crying, that she was suffering cruelly, but he offered her courage rather than maudlin sympathy. Hope seemed to flow through her veins at the meeting of the eyes. Whatever a man could do for her would be done by Curly.

They talked the situation over to-

"As it looks to me, we've got to find out two things-first, what has become of your father and, second, who did steal that money. I don't see it yet, but there's some link between the two things. I mean between the robbery and his disappearance."

"How do you mean?" Kate asked. "We'll say the robbers were his enemies-some of the Soapy Stone outfit, maybe. They have got him out of the way to satisfy their grudge and to make people think he did it. Unfortunately there is evidence that makes it look as if he might have done itwhat they call corroborating testimony."

"What does Sheriff Bolt think?" Curly waved the sheriff aside. "It don't matter what he thinks, Miss Kate. He says he thinks Luck was mixed up in the holdup. Maybe that's what he thinks, but we don't want to forget that Cass Fendrick made him sheriff and your father fought him to a fare-you-well."

"I'd like to talk with Bolt," the young woman announced.

"All right," Mackenzie assented.

"Tomorrow mo'ning-"

"No, tonight, Uncle Mac." The cattleman looked at her in surprise. Her voice rang with decision Her slight figure seemed compact with energy and resolution. Was this the girl who had been in helpless tears not ten minutes before?

"I'll see if he's at his office. Maybe he'll come up." Curly said.

> "Cass Fendrick is the man you want."

Forestalled the President. Peggy is feeling important these days, having been chosen secretary of her little church club. She was laboring over the minutes of her first meet-

ing when I suggested that she should always begin: "The meeting was called to order with the president in the chair." "But she wasn't," protested Peggy, indignantly. "I was. I got there first and got the big chair and the rest had only kindergarten seats."

City Lighting Modern.

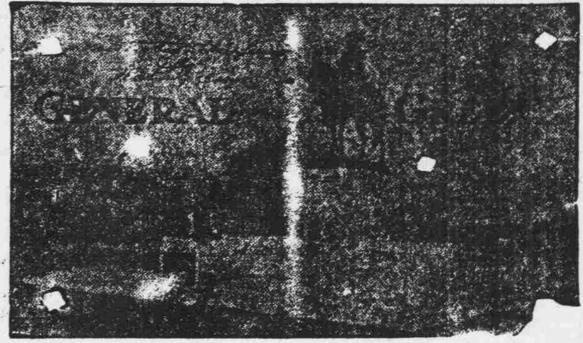
Lighting up a whole city at night is quite a modern invention, although filumination was used in some of the ancient cities. Paris and London dispute the priority in the matter of modern street lighting. London claims to have lighted its streets with lanterns as early as 1414, but this contention is disputed. During the sixteenth century lanterns for street lighting were



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